

## CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A lancet comprising:

a lancet body having a distal end and a needle piercing tip projecting from said distal end;  
a cap connected to said distal end with said piercing tip embedded therein by a frangible junction; said cap having at least one tab member projecting therefrom;

wherein said cap defines an opening sized for mating engagement with said lancet distal end and an interior axially projecting hub for receiving at least a portion of said piercing tip embedded therein when said cap is placed on said lancet distal end.

2. (original) A lancet according to claim 1, wherein said cap is generally cylindrical and includes first and second diametrically opposed radially projecting tabs.

3. (original) A lancet according to claim 1, wherein said cap defines an opening sized for mating engagement with said lancet distal end and an interior shoulder providing a stop upon engagement with said lancet distal end.

4. (canceled)

5. (new) A lancet comprising:

a lancet body having a distal end and a piercing tip projecting from said distal end;  
a cap connected to said distal end with said piercing tip embedded therein by a frangible junction, said cap comprising an opening sized for mating engagement with said lancet distal end, said opening facing in the distal direction away from said lancet body prior to separation of said frangible junction and removal of said cap from said lancet body.

6. (new) The lancet of claim 5, wherein said cap is generally cylindrical and further comprises first and second diametrically opposed radially projecting tabs.

7. (new) The lancet of claim 6, wherein said cap further comprises an interior shoulder providing a stop upon engagement with said lancet distal end.

8. (new) The lancet of claim 5, wherein said cap further comprises an interior axially projecting hub disposed within said opening for receiving at least a portion of said piercing tip embedded therein when said cap is removed from said lancet body, reversed and said opening is matingly engaged with said lancet distal end.

9. (new) The lancet of claim 8, wherein said cap is generally cylindrical and further comprises first and second diametrically opposed radially projecting tabs.

10. (new) The lancet of claim 9, wherein said cap further comprises an interior shoulder providing a stop upon engagement with said lancet distal end.

11. (new) A lancet comprising:

an elongated lancet body having a distal end;

a shaft disposed within said lancet body, said shaft comprising a piercing tip projecting from said distal end of said lancet body; and

a cap connected to said distal end of said lancet body with said piercing tip embedded therein by a frangible junction, said cap comprising a generally cylindrical opening sized for mating engagement with said lancet distal end, said opening coaxially aligned with said shaft prior to separation of said frangible junction and removal of said cap from said lancet body.

12. (new) The lancet of claim 11, wherein said opening faces in the distal direction from said lancet body prior to separation of said frangible junction and removal of said cap from said lancet body.

13. (new) The lancet of claim 11, wherein said cap further comprises at least one tab member projecting therefrom.

14. (new) The lancet of claim 11, wherein said cap further comprises first and second diametrically opposed radially projecting tabs.

15. (new) The lancet of claim 11, wherein said cap further comprises an interior axially projecting hub disposed within said opening for receiving at least a portion of said piercing tip embedded therein when said cap is removed from said lancet body, reversed and said opening is matingly engaged with said lancet distal end.

16. (new) The lancet of claim 12, wherein said cap further comprises an interior axially projecting hub disposed within said opening for receiving at least a portion of said piercing tip embedded therein when said cap is removed from said lancet body, reversed and said opening is matingly engaged with said lancet distal end.

17. (new) The lancet of claim 14, wherein said cap further comprises an interior axially projecting hub disposed within said opening for receiving at least a portion of said piercing tip embedded therein when said cap is removed from said lancet body, reversed and said opening is matingly engaged with said lancet distal end.

18. (new) A lancet comprising:

an elongated lancet body having a distal end;

a shaft disposed within said lancet body, said shaft comprising a piercing tip projecting from said distal end of said lancet body;

a cap connected to said distal end of said lancet body with said piercing tip embedded therein by a frangible junction, said cap comprising a generally cylindrical opening sized for mating engagement with said lancet distal end, said cap being generally cylindrical and coaxially aligned with said shaft prior to separation of said frangible junction and removal of said cap from said lancet body; and

at least one tab member projecting radially from said cap member.

19. (new) The lancet of claim 18, said at least one tab member comprising first and second diametrically opposed radially projecting tabs.

20. (new) The lancet of claim 19, said opening being coaxially aligned with said shaft prior to separation of said frangible junction and removal of said cap from said lancet body.

21. (new) The lancet of claim 20, wherein said cap further comprises an interior axially projecting hub disposed within said opening for receiving at least a portion of said piercing tip embedded therein when said cap is removed from said lancet body, reversed and said opening is matingly engaged with said lancet distal end.

22. (new) The lancet of claim 21, wherein said cap further comprises an interior shoulder providing a stop upon engagement with said lancet distal end.